

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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REMARKS BY GENERAL A. CONGER GOODYEAR

AT THE OPENING OF THE ABBY ALDRICH ROCKEFELLER SCULPTURE GARDEN
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, APRIL 28, 1953

The idea of a museum of modern art had long been in many minds twenty-five years ago. The organizers of the Armory show in 1913 had talked about it. But only in 1929 did anyone decide to do anything about it. Probably by now there would have been a Museum of Modern Art in New York anyway. But without action by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and two of her friends it would not have happened in 1929. Mrs. Rockefeller was the center of that action and it was her energy and quiet determination that provided the foundation of this institution.

From that time until her death the Museum was Mrs. Rockefeller's chief interest. It commanded always her unfaltering support. She insisted always that the Museum should not be a monument to any one person. She felt very strongly, that it must be the work of a team if it was to become the force in the community and in the world that its founders envisaged. So it was the work of a team. And so it still is.

In the early days of our beginning she felt that she should not give out publicity, lest the institution should be linked with her name. In a letter of that time too she wrote: "We must show only the best." These two principles of team play and insistence on the best have guided us through the years.

But it is altogether fitting that a portion of the institution, in whose founding she had so large a part, should bear the name of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller. May I suggest that this action should become a precedent.